



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY COUNCIL

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May 22, 1998

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Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M St., NW
Washington, DC 20554

MAY 22 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20554

Dear Ms. Salas:

On behalf of the Information Technology Industry Council, I am pleased to submit the original and 5 copies of our comments regarding the Proposed Revision of Maximum Collection Amounts for Schools and Libraries and Rural Health Care Providers, Public Notice, CC Docket No. 96-45, DA 98-872. As indicated in our table of contents, this is an exact copy of the document we filed electronically on May 22, 1998 (confirmation #1998522627545).

Sincerely,

Nancy A. Odenthal

The association of leading IT companies

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Table of Contents

**Proposed Revision of Maximum Collection Amounts for Schools and
Libraries and Rural Health Care Providers,
Public Notice, CC Docket No. 96-45, DA 98-872**

Exact Copy Filed Electronically via the Internet May 22, 1998

Pages 1-2 Comments/Letter

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY COUNCIL

May 22, 1998

The Honorable William Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Proposed Revision of Maximum Collection Amounts for
Schools and Libraries and Rural Health Care Providers, Public
Notice, CC Docket No. 96-45, DA 98-872

Dear Chairman Kennard:

I am writing on behalf of the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI) to express our support for the "internal connections" component of the Commission's program to connect eligible schools and libraries to the Internet. As decisions are made in the coming months regarding program funding levels, ITI believes that the internal connections component must remain an integral part of the services for which a recipient receives funding, regardless of the program's overall funding levels.

The rules adopted by the Commission pursuant to the Telecommunications Act of 1996 established competitively neutral mechanisms to extend both telecommunications and information services to disadvantaged schools and libraries. The Commission agreed with the recommendation of the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service that the wiring and equipment installed within schools and libraries are critical elements, along with basic transmission services and Internet access, for ensuring that our nation's schools and libraries have adequate access to advanced telecommunications and information services.

Schools and libraries will have access to the Internet and other advanced services only if those institutions can build the internal systems necessary to access the external connections. Inside wiring and networking to connect individual classrooms, offices or other points within a school or library make a useful, scaleable, education-oriented network possible. Otherwise, only a handful of computers in a school or library would have direct access to the Internet and other information services. Users on other computers would not be able to take advantage of the myriad information resources and education applications available through the Internet. The investment of universal service contribution dollars in connections for schools and libraries

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Fiona Branton, ITI
May 22, 1998
Page 2 of 2

to the Internet will be wasted if that investment does not include the necessary internal connections that enable all users in an institution to access connections to the Internet and other advanced information services.

ITI is the leading trade association for manufacturers and vendors of computers, computing devices, office equipment and information services. As companies that provide a significant share of the hardware, software, and services that schools and libraries need, we know first-hand the importance of ensuring that schools and libraries have the equipment and systems they need to establish the internal connections required to access advanced services. The Commission should not exclude internal connections from the complement of equipment and services for which a school or library may use the funds it receives.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Fiona Branton".

Fiona Branton
Vice President and Chief Counsel
Information Technology Industry Council

cc: Commissioner Ness
Commissioner Powell
Commissioner Tristani
Commissioner Furchgott-Roth